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ABSTRACT

A study investigated teachers' attitudes concerning the first year of the Reading/Writing Immersion (R/WI) project, which assisted early years teachers in the White Horse Plain School Division, Manitoba, Canada, to become more effective in working with students who were at-risk of failing to develop reading and writing performance goals. Eleven of 12 participants in the project completed or partially completed surveys. Results indicated that: (1) the location and overall quality of meetings were satisfactory; (2) overall, the materials and reading used in the study group phase of the project were useful; (3) site visits were either very useful or somewhat useful, and the visits were considered as important as other components of the project; (4) in most instances, the project was meeting participant expectations, except that some participants did not expect to be so actively involved in developing objectives, collecting data, and writing reports; (5) participants were very satisfied with support provided by university staff members; (6) the reports helped participants make connections between study group materials and classroom practice, develop an implementation plan for year 2, evaluate the value of the project, and evaluate student progress; and (7) participants indicated that they had learned a number of new skills and were already using them in their classrooms. Recommendations include: continuation and expansion of the project; continuation of the study group meetings; devotion of more planning and time to debriefing sessions after site visits; and continuation of participants' assessment of student outcomes. (The survey instrument with tabulations of data for each question is attached.) (RS)

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ED 361 680

Reading/Writing Immersion:
A Decision Making Literacy Development Project

White Horse Plain School Division #20

Teacher Survey
Year One

June 23, 1993

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Note - * denotes "official" or funded members of the Project.

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Reading/Writing Immersion:
A Decision Making Literacy Development Project

Teacher Survey
Year One

Introduction

The Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training approved and funded the Reading/Writing Immersion (R/WI) Project for three schools in White Horse Plain School Division #20: (1) Bon Homme Hutterian Colony School; (2) St. Francois Xavier School; and (3) St. Laurent School. The school division provided money for release time for additional teachers from the three funded schools and two other schools (i.e., Maxwell Hutterian Colony School and St. Eustache School) in order that they might also participate in the R/WI Project. As well, the University of Manitoba participants agreed to do some site visitations for the added sites and teachers. The Project officially began in September 1992. R/WI was designed to assist Early Years teachers in becoming more effective in working with students who were "at-risk" of failing to develop the reading and writing performance goals. Since one of the purposes of R/WI was to promote literacy development at all grade levels in the participating schools, a resource teacher from each of the schools was identified by the school's principal to take part. In the participating schools, resource teachers function as collaborative, school-based consultants. It was envisioned that the consultative-collaborative nature of their role would serve to build an ethos or climate for collective language arts efforts in each school. Collegial consultation efforts were perceived as one way of pooling and effectively multiplying the knowledge base and skills stemming from R/WI. A total of five Grade 1 teachers, two Grade 2 teachers, five resource teachers, and two Faculty of Education (University of Manitoba) staff members participated in the R/WI Project during the 1992-93 school year.

During the 1992-93 school year, R/WI was comprised of two components. The first was a study group or workshop component that took place between September 1992 and May 1993. There were eight workshop meetings held at the St. Francois-Xavier School. The meetings involved the presentation and/or discussion of: (a) whole language issues; (b) procedures and materials related to the teaching of reading and writing skills; (c) the development of reading and writing objectives; (d) the assessment of reading and writing skills; (e) classroom management strategies; (f) the effectiveness of procedures being tried in the classrooms; (g) Project report writing; and (h) other Project related matters.

Second, a site visitation component took place between November 1992 and June 1993. In this component, the University staff observed the participants using Project strategies with students they had identified as being at-risk of not meeting reading and/or writing performance expectancies. Another aspect of this component involved the University staff demonstrating instructional strategies and assessing student performance. This allowed the teachers to view the modeling of a variety of teaching and assessment techniques. The teachers were debriefed after each site visit. The observation sessions were also used to provide participants with constructive feedback regarding their instruction and to assist with the analysis of student performance.

An important aspect of the R/WI Project is that it was designed to operate as a collaborative model. That is all of the participants were to work together to design the specific direction of the Project. The basic premises of the Project are that effective teachers are competent "decision makers" and that professional growth is dependent on one's ability to monitor or reflect on their teaching performance. Therefore, the study group or workshop component of the Project was not the traditional, lecture style university class. The Project participants established agendas, topics for discussion, book study sessions, book fairs, cooperative reporting and other joint activities. In these sessions the university personnel acted as facilitators. A second aspect of the collaborative approach was that it allowed each school to

develop their own unique program based on the specific characteristics of their educational community.

One funding condition was that this Project be evaluated. Therefore, an evaluation plan was designed and accepted by the Project's Management Committee. This plan called for a process evaluation (an evaluation of the implementation of the Project) during the Project's first year of operation (i.e., the 1992-93 school year), and for implementation and outcome evaluations (effects of the Project on the students) during the second and third years (i.e., school years 1993-94 and 1994-95). A two-part evaluation design was selected as it allowed for complete Project implementation prior to the assessment of student outcomes. University personnel were given the responsibility of carrying out the process evaluations and school division staff members were assigned responsibility for the outcome evaluations.

Year One Evaluation Method

The methodology used for the Year 1 process evaluation was a teacher survey. A survey methodology was selected as it was the most economical method of providing detailed information to the Student Support Branch, Manitoba Education and Training and White Horse Plain School Division No. 20.

Instrument

The purpose of the survey was to collect data about the processes used to accomplish the goals stipulated for Year 1 of the Project. It was designed by the University personnel, members of the Student Support Branch, and members of the R/WI Management Committee. The survey included multiple choice and open-ended questions. A copy is provided in Appendix A.

Procedure

Since both "official" and "unofficial" members of the Project took part in the two major components of R/WI (i.e., the study group or workshop meetings and the site visits), all 12 participants were given a survey to complete at the April 22, 1993 meeting. The participants

were directed to take the survey away with them and compete it at their convenience. They were also asked not to discuss the survey with other participants. Participants were provided pre-addressed, stamped envelopes for returning the completed surveys.

As all responses were to remain confidential, the teachers were asked not to place their names on the surveys nor the return envelopes. The surveys were to be returned within two weeks. Instructions on how to complete the survey, along with a phone number to call if they had any questions, were included on the survey. The survey took approximately one hour to complete.

Teacher Survey Results

Of the 12 surveys handed out to Project participants, 11 (91.7%) completed or partially completed surveys were returned. In order to maintain confidentially, only total group data will be presented.

To facilitate the reader's understanding of the survey data, the authors organized the results into seven topic areas: (1) Meetings; (2) Materials and Readings; (3) Site Visits; (4) Project Expectations; (5) Support for Project; (6) The Report Writing Process; and (7) Program Usefulness and Final Comments.

Meetings

A total of four full-day and four half-day meetings were held during the first year of the R/WI Project. Section I of the survey asked the teachers to respond to five general questions regarding the location and overall quality of the meetings.

1. The meetings for the Reading/Writing Immersion Program have been held at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School. How do you feel about this location?

On the April, 1993 survey 9 (81.8%) of the respondents stated that the "location is fine", 1 (9.1%) reported that it did "not matter" where the meetings were held, and 1 (9.1%) did not respond to the question.

2. Rate the room in which the meetings have been held in by <u>circling</u> the most appropriate response.

All eleven respondents rated the meeting room's cleanliness, lighting and size as being "very good". A total of 9 (81.8%) respondents rated the room's temperature as being "very good" and 2 (18.2%) rated it as "good".

**3. In your opinion, how would you rate the overall organization of the meetings held so far?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.**

Three (27.3%) of the of the 11 respondents stated that the group meetings had been "very well organized" and the other 8 (72.7%) indicated that they had been "well organized". In the comments/suggestion portion of the question the following responses were provided:

- "Agendas always handed out. People were asked for their input in setting agenda."
- "I would like to see less time spent on organizing our agendas (e.g., times & dates of meetings) and more time spent on specific problems, concerns and practical ideas."
- "Meetings got off to a somewhat confusing start with many digressions. However, became more in tune with group as time went on. Cover a topic & then get on with the business on the agenda."
- "More time discussing how to's and less discussing management - perhaps some dates, times, etc., could be suggested before meetings & simply confirmed quickly at the regular meeting."

4. Given that one of the main goals of this Project is that a collaborative approach be utilized, how satisfied are you with the opportunities you have had with regards to input into the agendas of the meetings? Comments/suggestions for improvements.

Of the 11 respondents, 8 (72.7%) reported being "very satisfied" with their opportunities for input regarding meeting agendas. The remaining 3 (27.3%) stated that they were "somewhat satisfied" their opportunities. Only one respondent made a comment regarding agenda input -- "My needs differed from group needs & therefore it was hard to address them."

5. When you have made suggestions with regards to the meeting agendas, did you feel that your suggestions were given adequate consideration? Comments/suggestions.

Seven (63.6%) of the respondents reported that the suggestions they made were given "very adequate consideration", 3 (27.3%) stated their suggestions were given "adequate

consideration" and 1 (9.1%) noted that their suggestions were "were considered, but not adequately". One positive and one negative comment was provided:

- "Always considered. Information was always forwarded whenever a request was made."
- "More strategies requested but not received to my liking."

Summary. Combining the results of the five questions on the group meetings, it can be concluded that the participants were satisfied with the location of the meetings, the room in which the meetings were held, the organization of the meetings and their opportunities for input into the meeting agendas. Written responses did not indicate any patterns of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Materials and Readings

The study group component, held at the St. Francois Xavier Elementary School, was designed to discuss issues, attitudes and skills related to the teaching of reading and writing. It was in this component that the majority of instructional procedures were presented and discussed. As part of the component, a variety of materials and readings were provided to the R/WI participants. To assess these materials and readings, questions 6 through 13 were included on the survey.

6. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the reading material that have been provided to you?
Comments/suggestions.

Two (18.2%) of the participants rated the quality of the reading materials provided as being of a "very high quality" and 9 (81.8%) rated them as of a "high quality". The participants provided four comments and/or suggestions about the readings and materials used:

- "Especially appreciated Marie Clay's book - Early detection of reading difficulties."
- "Books were well written, easy to read through and gave some useful ideas."
- "Difficult to get due to lack of funds." (This comment was most likely in reference to the fact that initially each participant did not have their own copy of the reading materials. The result was that one copy was sometimes shared between two or three participants.)
- "Suggestions for next year - "The hole in whole language" by Steve Truk."

7. Do you feel that the reading material provided to you thus far has presented: mostly new information, a half-and-half mixture of new and old information or mostly old information that I already knew?

The majority of the participants (8 or 72.7%) responded that the material presented to them was "a half-and-half mixture of new and old information". Three (27.3%) stated that the material included "mostly old information that I already knew".

8. Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of the reading material provided to you?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Five (45.5%) of the participants stated that the reading materials were "very useful" and 6 (54.5%0 indicated that they were "somewhat useful". Seven of the eight written comments about the usefulness of the reading materials were positive. The eight comments were:

- "I found it served to refresh my approach with different strategies."
- "Good to review."
- "I have used many ideas & procedures from some of the books."
- "The materials were valuable because they brought ideas that had been tried and perhaps forgotten or not used for awhile back to attention. There were also some new ideas."
- "Enjoyed looking at both sides of the material, as well as being able to clarify meaning with others."
- "The books read gave good ideas for the classroom as well as evaluation techniques."
- "Mary Clay"
- "Writing Begins at Home - least useful.
  Reading Begins at Home - least useful.
  M. Clay Early Detection of Reading Difficulties - most useful."

9. How would you rate the amount of information that has been provided to you?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Seven (63.6%) of the 11 respondents stated that the amount of information provided was "the right amount", 3 (27.3%) stated that the amount was "just a little too much material to be read in one week", and 1 (9.1%) did not respond to the question. Three participants provided

written suggestions for improvement and one provided a comment. The following "comments/suggestions for improvement" were made:

- "more time "sharing" how the information was used in our classes with strong/weak points."
- "Lots of support and guidance."
- "I would have liked more discussion on some of the handouts, such as checklists."
- "For those in the group who were not familiar with the materials."

The fact that some teachers had to share the reading materials may have caused them to feel pressured for time when reading the assigned materials and it is possible this influenced their responses to the question.

10. How adequate was the University Staff follow-up to the reading material (i.e., willingness to discuss/explain ideas presented in the materials/readings)?
Comments/suggestions for improvement.

When asked to rate University staff's follow-up on the reading material, 8 (72.7%) participants rated it as being "very adequate", 2 (18.2%) rated it as "adequate" and 1 (9.1%) rated it as "somewhat adequate". A review of the "comments/suggestions for improvements" revealed the following:

- "Sometimes felt opinions were not valid."
- "Time for this usually not long enough."
- "Perhaps more specific topics could be discussed. E.g., how to use some of M. Clay's strategies."

11. Do you feel that the reading material given to you covered the topic areas that you thought would be covered when you started the Program?

Of the 11 participants, 7 (63.6%) reported that they thought there were "very few surprises" with regard to the topic areas covered by the reading materials. Two (18.2%) participants reported that "there were a number of areas" covered by the reading materials that they did not expect, and 1 (9.1%) reported that there were "a lot of areas" covered that they did not expect. One (9.1%) participant did not respond to the question.

12. Were there topic areas you would have liked to have received reading material on, but did not?
If yes, what were those topic areas?

Eight (72.7%) of the respondents replied "no" to the question and 3 (27.3%) replied "yes". The three who replied "yes" provided these written comments:

- "Time to connect our goals and objectives to what is done for report cards."
- "more 'how to' and less statistics."
- "More indepth on observation techniques, meaning of observations and strategies & techniques to use."

One participant who answered the question "no" supplied the comment "But more discussion on evaluation & management techniques would have been valuable to me."

13. Given that this is a collaborative Project, did you feel that you could suggest reading material for the group?
Comments/suggestions

Ten (90.9%) participants replied "yes" to the question and 1 (9.1%) responded "no". The following "comments/suggestions" were made:

- "Sometimes is a qualifier here. I feel it depended on which way some members viewed the day."
- "Articles taken from International Reading Assoc. Journals, on students "at-risk" and methods tried by others."
  "Evaluating Literacy Price, Nichelson, Anthony."
  "Whole Language Evaluation for Classrooms O. & D. Cochrane."

Summary. The findings of this section on materials/readings indicated that, overall, the participants thought that the readings: (a) were of a high quality; (b) provided new information and reviewed old information; (c) contained useful information; and (d) presented few surp es in terms of the topic areas covered. Also, the large majority of the participants felt that the follow-up to the material provided by University staff was very adequate. Finally, given that one of the main goals of this Project is to develop a collaborative relationship among all participants, it is important to note that 90% of the individuals who responded to the survey thought that they were able to suggest materials/readings to the group.

Site Visits

During Year 1 of R/WI, University staff to visited each official Project participant's classroom on at least four different occasions during the year. The classrooms of the three unofficial Project members were visited on at least two occasions.

The visits were usually a half-day in length, but on several occasions more time was spent. What occurred during school visits was typically dictated by teacher requests. Typical school visit activities were: (a) observations of the entire class or individual students; (b) assessment of individual student performance; (c) consultation on a variety of topics; and (d) the demonstration of instructional or assessment techniques. Each visitation ended with the University staff meeting with the participants and providing information about teacher requests. In addition, suggestions were often made about matters other than those requested by the teachers. At some sites, the University staff also met with the principal and other staff members regarding matters related to the Project.

Questions 14 through 17 were designed to assess the visitation portion of the Project. Given that visits were only carried out for the six classroom teachers (three official and three unofficial participants), questions 14 through 17 have a high rate of non-responses. Also, some sites did not receive the final visits until after the teacher survey was completed.

14. How helpful were observations/suggestions made during the school visits in focusing the intent of the Program? Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Five (45.5%) of the respondents thought that the site visits were "very useful" and 3 (27.3%) believed them to be "somewhat useful". Three (27.3%) participants did not respond to the question. The non respondents may have been three of the four participating resource teachers as they did not have classrooms. Responses to the "comments/suggestions for improvement" section of the question produced the following:

- "I am unable to comment as I was not present at the time of these visits."
- "Some more comments on how the teacher could improve on evaluation techniques would have been welcomed. Comments made were very positive and encouraging."

- "School visits to my room were on a voluntary basis, but little time was allotted to de-briefing. Thank you for coming to observe - I'll take it that no news is at least not bad news!"

- "Some suggestions were very helpful, some would be helpful if more direct teacher input could be managed (more individual contact time)."

- Suggestions were interesting. However, how to use these with constricted time elements would have been useful."

- "Some good suggestions which have proven to be very useful."

15. How helpful were the school visits in assisting you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids? Comments/suggestions for improvement.

Three (27.3%) respondents reported that the site visits were "very useful" in assisting them to make connections between workshop material and teaching practice and 4 (36.4%) felt that the visits were "somewhat useful". Four (36.4%) participants did not respond to the question. Again, the non respondents may have been the four participating resource teachers. The following responses were provided in the "comments/suggestions for improvement" part of the question:

- "Useful because of discussion that occurred within group sessions after each school visit."

- "The feedback in our group sessions was informative. The suggestions made at the school were connected to our talks at the group meetings."

- "Ideas from the reading material were used in the classrooms."

16. Overall, when comparing all of the components of the Reading/Writing Immersion Project (i.e., sessions at the St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and school visits), how important were the school visits made by Gerry and Paul? Comments/suggestions.

Three (27.3%) of the respondents rated the site visits as "the most important component" of the Project and 4 (36.4%) others rated the visits as "equal in importance" to the other components of the Project. One (9.1%) participant felt the visits were "not as important" as other Project components and 3 (27.3%) did not respond to the question. Once again, it is likely that the 7 (63.6%) respondents who viewed the site visits as important were those the

visits were directed at, the classroom teachers. The following comments and suggestions were made:

- "Ideas were generated from other teachers as well. Discussions with others & sharing of work samples at the meetings were beneficial."
- "Without observations I did feel as if even though I had an opportunity to practice new strategies I had no one to give me an evaluation - which would be a very important learning tool to me."
- "I liked the tie-in between the visits and the group meetings."
- "Gave them a chance to view situations and perhaps direct them in giving ideas for the particular site."
- "As I was not an official member, I wasn't allowed as many school visits as the other schools. As a result, I can not really judge the value of the visits."

17. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add about the school visits?

Seven (63.6%) participants responded to the question. The comments or concerns were as follows:

- "I would like to be included in the school visits."
- "Next round I would like to see more ideas on how to integrate the ideas for the at-risk group into the classroom population, so that all students are benefiting from teacher contact."
- "Feedback from Gerry was very good. However, I would like more time with Gerry on specific strategies for assessment & programming."
- "I would like to have more time for conferencing with Gerry and Paul immediately following their visit in private (without other staff)."
- "Built in de-briefing (1/2 hour meeting at end of observations) should be included. This would ideally be a time the teacher is not in control of her/his class as well."
- "Due to my schedule was unable to be part of school visits. I am able to be in classroom weekly. The discussion afterwards would be beneficial."

Summary. All respondents stated that the site visits were either "very useful" or "somewhat useful" and the vast majority thought that the visits were "as important" as other components of the Project or "the most important" component. Comments and suggestions indicated that many of the participants would have liked more visitations and/or more time to debrief after the site visits.

We believe that "unofficial" Project participants accounted for most of the comments that indicated there were too few site visits or that they had not had adequate debriefing time. We hope that these perceptions do not have a negative impact on their future participation in the Project.

Finally, it is likely that the resource teachers represented the majority of the non respondents in this section and that this was due to the fact that they were not observed during site visits. However, some resource teachers did participate in debriefing sessions and other Project related discussions resulting from the site visits.

Project Expectations

Five questions in this section attempted to examine how closely Project (a) format, (b) study areas, (c) utility, (d) goals and outcomes, and (e) time expenditure matched participant expectancies. Finally, one question asked them for additional comments or suggestions about the amount of time taken by the Project.

18. At this point in time how similar is the Project to what you expected it to be? If it is not what you thought, how is it different?

Seven (63.6%) of the respondents to the question indicated that the Project was "somewhat close" to what they thought it would be, 1 (9.1%) stated it was "exactly" what they thought it would be and 1 (9.1%) noted that it was "very close" to what they thought it would be. One (9.1%) participant reported that is was "not at all" what they thought it would be and 1 (9.1%) other did not respond to the question. There were nine comments about how the Project differed from their expectancies for it:

- "I have never participated in such a project before. I like the idea of empowering the teacher but find teachers reticent to do this since they feel changes will likely be made later by administration."
- "Better than what I thought it would be."
- "I really had no idea other than it would entail reading & writing. Other details of what would go on throughout the year were not given to me."

- "I was not aware of the objectives of the Project in a specific sense. Just reading/writing. I therefore formulated my own objectives. I want to gain an understanding of whole language, familiarize myself with terminology & figure out how this would be manageable in a classroom situation."

- "Was told it was a course, did not realize it was a funded project."

- "To be perfectly truthful I had no specific idea of what the program would be covering. I was told I would be in the program in September and had been given no indication of what was involved except that I would be pulled out of the classroom 20 days a year for a reading and writing program."

- "I thought there would be more collaboration between project members but because of time/distance this did not occur."

- "Thought there would be more "training" in terms of observing & strategies."

- "We were not given any information previous to the start of the Project. As a result I didn't have any specific expectations. All I knew was that it was something to do with reading & writing."

The comments seem to indicate that most of the participants did not really know what the Project was about and as a result had formulated only minimal number of expectations for it. It is also possible that their comments reflect a lack of experience with collaborative decision making and/or the failure to believe they would be allowed to participate in such a way. The first comment above is indicative of these possibilities. Finally, experience may have led the teachers to believe that the R/WI group meetings would resemble the typical instructor directed, lecture format of University course work.

19. Are the topic areas that have been covered since September, the topic areas that you thought would be covered? If no, what was different?

Five (45.5%) respondents stated that the topics covered were those they expected to cover and 5 (45.5%) indicated that they were not what they expected. One (9.1%) participant did not respond to the question. Those who responded that the topic areas differed from what they expected made the following comments:

- "I had no idea we would be working on goals, objectives, evaluation or that reports would be required."

- "I thought it would be more on honing observation skills and follow-up on findings."

- "I did not know that we would be setting goals and objectives and discussing data collection procedures or that we were going to write year end reports."

- "Thought it was a course on "how to" & not so much statistics, graphing, etc., of results."

- "I expected it to be just strategies to help improve reading & writing in the classroom. I did not expect data collection & report writing to be part of it."

The comments indicated that what surprised the participants the most was the fact that they had to collect student outcome data and write reports based on the data.

20. Is the Project turning out to be as useful to you as you thought it would be? Comments/suggestions for improvements.

Seven (63.6%) respondents stated that the R/WI Project had been "somewhat useful" and 2 (18.2%) thought that it had been "very useful". One (9.1%) participant indicated they thought the Project had "not been very useful" and 1 (9.1%) other did not respond to the question. The following comments and/or suggestions for improvements were made:

- "I have to say somewhat because our school starts English in Grade 2 not Grade 1."

- "It has helped me look at my goals for individuals and how I will help them arrive at those goals."

- "I've learned: 1) how to write and formulate objectives for reading & writing & the importance of this to the teacher; 2) some new techniques/ideas especially from the material read & the group members."

- For me personally, I feel it is a rehash of things I have already used, learned."

21. At this point, how confident are you that your expectations for the Project will be reached? Why or why not?

Five (45.5%) respondents felt that they were "somewhat confident" about having their expectations met and 2 (18.2%) stated that they were "very confident" that their expectations would be reached. Three (27.3%) indicated that they were "not very confident" about having their expectations met and 1 (9.1%) participant did not respond to the question. The following are participant comments made about why they felt or did not feel confident about having their expectations met:

- "There has been several disruptions within my school this year, which I feel has slowed down the progress of my students."

- "What has taken place so far is not what I thought I would gain from the project."
- "I expect my children to achieve the goals set out for them. I have learned to be more objective both in setting objectives and collecting baseline data but still have to be more specific yet."
- "I thought it was a course on "how to" & not so much statistics, graphing, etc., of results."
- "We have had little direction or assistance from administration. The teachers are not anxious to do paperwork. They will try new methods."

22. Going back to September, was the amount of time you put into the Project what you expected or not?

Five (45.5%) of the respondents noted that they had spent "just about the amount of time" they had expected. Three (27.3%) participants thought they had spent "a bit more time" than they expected and 1 (9.1%) felt she had spent "much more time" than expected. Two (18.2%) participants did not respond to the question.

23. Do you have any additional comment/concerns/suggestions to make regarding the amount of time taken up by this Project?

Only one comment/concern/suggestion was made -- "Looking back, perhaps fewer meetings and more in school time. However, the readings would not have been given their necessary weight in this case."

Summary. In most instances the Project was meeting participant expectations. Most of them thought the Projects was similar to what they expected it to be. However, their comments indicated that a number of them (a) did not expect to be so actively involved in developing objectives, collecting data, and writing reports, and (b) thought the study group or workshop component of the Project would be more like a University course than it was.

Also, a large percentage of the participants thought the R/WI Project was very or at least somewhat useful to them. In addition, most respondents felt very or somewhat confident that the Project would meet their expectations.

Finally, the participants were about equally split in believing that the time spent on the Project was just about what they expected or somewhat more than they had expected. No one thought they spent less time than expected.

Support For The Project

The two questions in this section attempted to acquire participant ratings of (a) the university staff members' participation in the Project and (b) the support provided by their school's administration.

24. In your opinion, how would you rate the University Staff in the areas listed below? Comments/suggestions for improvement.

All 11 (100.0%) of the respondents stated that the University staff members "always" treated them as professionals. Ten (90.9%) respondents thought University staff members "always" (a) were approachable and (b) empathized with the problems they had to deal with in their classrooms. Nine (81.8%) indicated that the University staff members "always" (a) valued their opinions, (b) willingly answered all their questions, and (c) suggested rather than dictated or criticized. Eight (72.7%) noted that they "always" (a) made suggestions that were useful to them and (b) helped them to feel more confident about what they did in their classrooms. Seven (63.6%) thought that University staff "always" tried to make the Project challenging to them. Finally, 6 (54.4%) thought that they "always" actively sought and encouraged participant input.

All other responses indicated that the University staff members "sometimes" did all of the above things. One participant did not respond to the question about whether or not University staff made the Project challenging.

Only one comment was made -- "Excellent!"

25. In your opinion, how would you rate the support being provided to this Program from your school's administrator(s)? Comments/suggestions for improvements.

Six (54.5%) respondents indicated that they thought their administrator had provided "very good" support to the R/WI Project. However, 4 (36.4%) noted that support had been "poor" and 1 (9.1%) stated that it had been "very poor". The following comments and/or suggestions for improvement were provided:

- "Administrator does not seem to understand fully the direction of the project."

- "I'm not sure if this was to mean support in getting substitutes, etc., or support in the classroom. On the days of school site visits, it would have been nice to be cleared of all supervision or given some time to discuss my concerns with Gerry and Paul."

- "Although days were given to attend the Reading & Writing Immersion meetings, & reading materials were made available on a shared basis; no time was given to debrief after site visitations or writing of objectives or deciding on testing tools would have been beneficial to me. Admin. did occasionally ask if the meeting went well."

- "No follow-up. Miscommunication from the start."

- "Our principal was very receptive & supportive to the project and our work. The principal made report writing & budgeting much easier & helped us with this area."

- "Excellent!"

Summary. In general, Project participants seemed very satisfied with the support provided by the University staff members. The majority of the respondents indicated that they thought their school administrator provided "very good" support for the Project. The comments indicated that some participants were concerned about their administrator's understanding of the Project goals or communication of these. In addition, some felt they should have been provided with time to be debriefed or discuss concerns after site visits. Given the nature of these comments, we believe that they are likely the result of the fact that "unofficial" Project members were not provided with as much site visit time or information as "official" Project members.

The Report Writing Process

During the first year of the R/WI Project the teachers were responsible for writing Project Implementation Plans for Year 2 and Student Outcome Reports. The Project Implementation Plans were used as part of the submission to the Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training for Year 2 funding. In Year 1, Student Outcome Reports were in-house documents and viewed as trial runs for the reports that are to be written in Years 2 and 3 of the Project. University staff provided the Project participants with materials and instruction related to report writing. In addition, time was spent during study group sessions and site visits discussing how to: (a) collect data, (b) display the data, and (c) write the reports. Participants also shared and discussed their reports with each other and the University staff

members. The following questions were designed to examine participant opinions about the report writing process.

26. How helpful were the University staff in assisting you in writing your final school report? Comments/suggestions:

Five (45.5%) respondents indicated that the University staff members had been "very helpful" in assisting them with report writing. Two (18.2%) other participants thought they had been "somewhat helpful" and 4 (35.4%) did not respond to the question. The following comments and/or suggestions were made:

- "A very detailed outline was given."
- "Some suggestions given. However, I am not confident that what was compiled will be well done or even coherent."
- "Not applicable to me."
- "No report written."

It is quite likely that the 4 participants who did not respond to the question were "unofficial" group members and thus did not have to write reports. It is also noteworthy that the last study group session dealt primarily with the presentation and discussion of Student Outcome Reports, and this session was held after the teacher surveys had been returned.

27. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids? Comments/suggestions:

Two (18.2%) respondent thought that writing the final school reports was "very useful" in helping them make connections between the material/content present in the study group sessions and what they did with their students. Two (18.2%) other participants thought that report writing was "somewhat useful" in helping them to make these connections. Seven (63.6%) group members did not respond to the question. The comments and/or suggestions made are as follows:

- "Still completing this report."
- "I haven't completed the report yet."

- "No report written."
- "Not applicable to me."

Once again, it is likely that many of participants who did not respond to the question were "unofficial" group members and did not have to write reports. As two of the comments indicated, another reason for the number of non respondents was that they had not finished writing their reports when the teacher surveys were done.

28. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to develop an implementation plan for Year 2 of the Project?
Comments/suggestions:

Two (18.2%) stated that writing the final school report was "very useful" in helping them to develop an implementation plan for Year 2, 2 (18.2%) reported it was "somewhat useful" and 2 (18.2%) indicated that is was "not at all useful". Five (45.5%) individuals did not respond to the question. The comments and/or suggestions made are as follows:

- "We had to do the Implementation Plan before the final report."
- "I haven't written the final report but have already done the Implementation Plan."
- "It helped me see the weaknesses in my program and what changes I would make (especially in terms of setting objectives and choosing evaluation techniques)."
- "Not applicable to me."
- "I have not written one."
- "Unable to tell. May not be continuing next year."

It is obvious that at some sites the reports were written in a different order than anticipated and as a result, at those sites final report writing did not have an impact on the development of an Implementation Plan for Year 2. Once again, those not responding to the question were likely "unofficial" Project members who did not write reports and did not have to submit a Year 2 Implementation Plan to the Student Support Branch.

29. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the value of the Project to your professional development? Comments/suggestions:

Four (36.4%) individuals thought writing the final school report was "somewhat useful" in helping them to evaluate the value of the R/WI Project, 1 (9.1%) stated it was "very useful" and 1 (9.1%) thought it was "not at all useful". Five (45.5%) participants did not respond to the question. The following comments and/or suggestions were made:

- "With or without the report it has been valuable to me in a professional development sense."
- "It helped me see the weaknesses in my program and what changes I would make (especially in terms of setting objectives and choosing evaluation techniques)."
- "Report has not yet been done."
- "We are only partially finished so it is difficult to make an accurate judgement!"
- "Not applicable to me."
- "I have not written one."

The large number of non respondents was likely due to reasons similar to those presented in question 28.

30. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the progress made by the students involved in the Project? Comments/suggestions:

Only 1 (9.1%) respondent felt that writing the final school report was "not very useful" in helping them to evaluate the progress made by their students. Four (36.4%) others thought writing the final school report was "somewhat useful" and 2 (18.2%) stated that it was "very useful". Four (36.4%) participants did not respond to the question. The following comments and/or suggestions were made:

- "I think I have become more specific in evaluating."
- "By observing the data collected, I could see the growth or lack of growth in each student even without having to write a report."
- "Useful information to have if in future those students should happen to be referred to resource."

- "Again, because I wasn't finished I couldn't make a completely accurate judgement."
- "Not applicable."
- "Not written."

The large number of non respondents was likely due to reasons similar to those presented in question 27.

31. What additional assistance could have been provided that would have helped you in writing your final school report?

- "None!"
- "Not applicable."
- "A Mac computer to help with graphing the data."
- "I'm not sure what types of assistance are available."
- "I would have liked to have seen sample reports of other schools to have an idea of length, format, etc."
- "An impossible task unless we had the money to pay personnel to proof report many times until it was up to the caliber that is required at the department."

A possible reason for some of the above comments was that even though other study group sessions dealt with report writing, the last session focused primarily on the presentation and discussion of Student Outcome Reports from each site, and this session was held after the teacher surveys had been returned.

32. Do you have any other comments/concerns you would like to add about writing the final school report?

No additional comments or concerns were expressed.

Summary. The information in this section should be examined with the following in mind: (a) some participants were still in the process of writing reports when they completed the survey; (b) some sites wrote the reports in a different order than anticipated; and (c) the "unofficial" members of the Project were not required to write a report. For the most part those members who were required to write a report thought the following:

1. the University staff members were helpful in assisting them with the report writing process;

2. the report writing process helped them to make connections between study group material and classroom practice;

3. writing the final report helped them to develop an implementation plan for Year 2 of the Project;

4. final report writing helped them to evaluate the value of the Project to their professional development; and

5. writing the final report helped them to evaluate student progress.

Program Usefulness and Final Comments

The final section of the survey asked questions that examined the overall usefulness of the Project and participant suggestions for improving it.

33. Based on your experiences with the Project, how would your rate the following items? Comments.

All 11 (100.0%) participants stated that: (a) they were trying out some of the ideas and instructional techniques introduced by the Project in their classrooms; (b) they had already adopted some of these ideas and techniques as part of their instructional program; and (c) the information presented by the Project had been useful. Ten (90.9%) reported that the Project had helped them to improve their teaching skills. When asked whether the Project had produced positive changes in their students' performance, 2 (18.2%) reported noticing "many positive changes", 6 (54.5%) stated they had seen "a few positive changes", and 3 (27.3%) indicated that they did not know.

None of the participants reported that: (a) the Project had not been useful; (b) they had not adopted any of the ideas or instructional techniques provided in by the Project; (c) they had not seen positive changes in their students' performance; nor (d) they had not tried any of the instructional techniques presented. Only 1 (9.1%) participant thought that the Project had not helped them to improve their teaching skills.

The following comments were made:

- "The ideas discussed & shared were good."
- "Comments & advice from Dr. Bravi & Paul have been very helpful, the professional reading material interesting and the group discussion extremely helpful!"

- "This is the pre-start of my primary level experience after 13 yrs. off; all these strategies aren't new but all the terminology & method of presentation are. This is an excellent way to begin in-depth inservicing in what you are expected to teach. This is a novel concept in education."

- "Taught me to be more accountable for what I teach & why."

- "This project has made me much more aware & accountable to the students who are having difficulty."

- "Use M. Clay Dictation Test more frequently - also other format of this technique."

- "I wouldn't do anything much differently than I did before. I am always refining techniques & using different strategies with different students."

34. Name/describe some changes that you have already made in the way you work with children that have been a direct result of this Project.

Eight (72.7%) participants described 19 changes that were a direct result of the Project.

The changes are as follows:

a. Objective and Goals

- "I think that having established formal objectives in the fall term, perhaps, this raised my self-expectations of the material I was going to cover with my Grade 1s. Because of my higher self-expectations, I think my students have made more progress than would have normally occurred."

- "Setting objectives helped me to focus on what I was going to do in the classroom & why."

- "The setting of goal/objectives (these have not usually been formalized)."

- "I've become more aware of problems that students have and have made more of an effort to keep track of progress etc."

- "I have tried to be more specific in reading and writing objectives in daily lessons. I have set higher goals/expectations for the children from the beginning of the year and they seem to be accomplishing more."

b. Assessment and Evaluation

- "I have found time for more individual testing, reading/writing conferencing for the Project group, but this sometimes has been at the expense of other groups in the class."

- "Reading conference on an individual basis with all students on a regular basis."

- "Getting taped reading of all students to be used as a method of evaluation; both in fall and end of the year. Next year I wish to do it in the middle of the year as well."

- "I am working on developing oral language more. i.e., asking students to explain why they answered what they did - however, this coming much more natural to me in math & science."

- "Tools for evaluation of student progress/performance."

c. General Instructional Changes

- "I've used many ideas from my readings & discussions at meetings with students."

- "The project has made me concentrate on the writing process & the different steps in writing."

- "I have been made aware of more whole language strategies & how I can incorporate them into a theme."

- "The project has "spurred" me on to read other materials not listed by the project."

- "I wouldn't do anything much differently than I did before. I am always refining techniques & using different strategies with different students."

d. Specific Instructional Changes Adopted

- "I have used some of the procedures mentioned by M. Clay in the second chapter on When it is Hard to Remember."

- "Arrange for repetition and over learning."

- "Practice reconstruction (magnetic letters were purchased and used)."

- "I use the Dolch 220 Basic Sight Words in context handout. I like the large print but find the words are too close together."

It is noteworthy that 10 of the 19 reported changes were related to the specification and assessment of student performance. The other nine changes reported were related to the adoption of either general or specific instructional strategies.

35. If you could change one thing about the Project, what would it be?

Seven (63.6%) participants mentioned 10 changes they would make in the Project. The changes are as follows:

a. Site Visits By University Staff

- "During site visits, I feel that, in hind sight, I would have liked to have done something in the room that specifically relates to one or more of my objectives. Then I would have liked to discuss the possible ways of evaluating each student."

- "I would have wanted school visitations that included an immediate de-briefing component. During that de-briefing I'd like to look at the following; (1) students

needs that I may have missed; (2) strategies used - were they used appropriately?; was there another way that would be more beneficial in reaching my goal; (3) discuss objectives & what has/not been done over the last month to meet them."

- "More site visitations with specific concrete strategies, techniques etc. that I haven't seen before."

- "I want more school visits."

b. Site Visits By Project Participants

- "I would like to see visitations between group members to observe other classrooms in session and techniques or strategies used by other teachers."

- "I feel that although I liked this project because of all the ideas/suggestions I've used, I still think that this project is somehow disjointed & not organized very well. I would like to keep in more contact with other teachers as to what they're doing, how can I improve my skills & where do I go from here?"

c. Study Group Discussions

- "More discussion time for each individual school."

- "Break up into small units for discussion part of the time."

- "Perhaps more assignments brought in from classrooms to view and comment on would spur discussion."

- "More sharing of group strategies and materials."

Four comments requested changes that provide for more site visits and expanded debriefing sessions. Two others indicated that the participants would have liked to have visited other participants' classrooms. Finally, four comments made note of improvements desired in study group sessions.

36. Given what has taken place between the start of the Project and now, do you have any suggestions that you have not already made earlier in this survey for improving the Reading/Writing Immersion Project? If so, what are they?

Five (45.5%) participants gave additional suggestions for improving the R/WI Project. The suggestions are as follows:

a. Introducing Participants to the Project

- "A clearer outline, at the beginning of the project, as to what we would be doing throughout the year."

- "I would like to see teachers who came into the Project be given a better introduction to the Project than I was given."

- "I would like to see teachers who came into the Project be given a better introduction to the Project than I was given."

- "It would be nice to see new teachers coming "on-line" to meet in the June of each year. At this time they could be introduced to the program i.e. the goals of this project are; summary of what project has accomplished this year; expectations for their involvement. In this way data could be gathered right at the beginning of Sept. so that they could have objectives & students to focus on by end of September."

b. Parents

- "I would like to see more information on parent education."

- "I would like to see a Parent connection to the Project."

c. Sharing Amongst Participants

- "I would like to see more teacher sharing of ideas, strategies, examples of work."

- "Seeing that our objectives were very similar between schools, I would have liked more sharing of ideas & work samples that relate to a given objective, or sharing of evaluation techniques for a given objective."

- "I feel that discussions & sharing between teachers were the most beneficial things in the project."

d. Other

- "The use of videos to show teachers and children at work."

The most common theme was the need to provide participants with a more adequate introduction to the Project. Once again, a few mentioned that they would like to build in more opportunities for sharing. Two respondents stated that the Project should include some form of parent involvement.

37. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add, but haven't been asked?

Seven (63.6%) participants made additional comments about the R/WI Project. The comments are as follows:

a. Communication

- "I feel that I was in the dark about a lot of what this project was about. It wasn't until mid-winter that I started to realize what was expected of me. It was hard to pin point

just exactly what the project was all about. I'm not sure why I was not more informed but it did cause a lot of anxiety at first."

- "I have learned new ideas from being a part of the project. All members have tried to make the "unofficial members" feel welcomed. However, I was unaware that this was a Project when I first became involved. I was informed that this was a course thus I do not feel that the Project has met my needs & expectations. This is no part the fault of the Project or any one involved in it, it is simply a matter of miscommunication from the start."

- "In the future, I think that new teachers who are joining the project should be given more information on what is involved in the project and what is expected of them."

b. Other

- "No. Thank you! Both!"

- "We mentioned that students are more successful in whole language classrooms when they have been exposed to those strategies by their parents. In that light I would like to suggest that where possible information / reading materials should be offered to mini-school instructors and parents of mini-school students. Also that school libraries be available to the 3 & 4 year olds to sign out books on a regular basis. This would encourage parents to read to their children. It would also encourage oral language development. I feel this is especially important in that our area is not covered by a library service; other than "green bag" extension program. A program the majority of young parents are not familiar with."

- "I am concerned about the upper administration's control over some of the aspects of this program e.g. handling of finances (books)."

- "I was alerted to the new literature books that talk about math concepts. I was glad to see the book rep from National, his books and have his catalogue."

On this final question a number of participants again mentioned that Project goals and expectancies needed to be more clearly communicated and at an earlier date.

Summary. A large majority of the participants indicated that they had learned a number of new skills and were already using them in their classrooms. The two most common changes reported were clearer specification of performance objectives, and the utilization of more assessment and varied assessment strategies. Participants also indicated that the Project had resulted in a number of positive changes in their students' performance.

When asked about changes they would make in the project the participant responses indicated four common themes: (a) the desire for more site visits (i.e., by both University staff and the participants) and more time for debriefing; (b) the need for more adequate participant

introduction to the Project; (c) the request for more inter-staff meetings and time to for small group discussions; and (d) the perception that parents need to be more involved in the Project. However, a large number of participants either made no comment about change or stated that they felt no change was needed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

An examination of the survey data from Year 1 led to the following conclusions and recommendations.

We believe that building relationships between public schools and universities is difficult, but it is worth the effort. It is quite likely a very necessary process. The two institutions working together on an ongoing basis results in improved practice at both the school and university levels. Effective change does not occur through mandates from the central office or higher administration. It results from building- and department-level initiatives by dedicated professionals.

On the basis of the results of the teacher surveys, it was concluded that though there were some minor problems in the Project, overall *it was a success*. The comments from the participating teachers were generally, very positive. *The goals and objectives of the Project have been met.*

Recommendations.

1. **On the basis of the results of the teacher survey, the White Horse Plain School Division No. 20 should encourage and support the continuation of the R/WI Project within the three original schools.**

2. **Given the teachers' perceptions concerning the success of the R/WI Project in the three original schools, the White Horse Plain School Division No. 20 and Student Support Branch of Manitoba Education and Training should encourage and support its expansion into additional schools.**

Meetings

During the first year of the Project, study group meetings were *viewed as well organized, valuable, worthwhile and/or helpful.* The collaborative approach was seen as being of particular value and was mentioned in response to several survey questions. The participants

also felt *that their suggestions were given very adequate consideration.* The location of the meetings, at St. Francois Xavier School, was thought to be convenient for all participants.

Recommendations.

3. **Study group meetings were an important aspect of the Project and should be continued for the new members that are brought on board.**

4. **Study group sessions should continue in their present format.**

5. **In Year 2 each site should hold study group meetings that include the original Project participants and the extension teachers.**

6. **During Year 2 there should be a small number of meetings that bring together the participants from each site. The main purpose of such meetings would be to network for sharing and support.**

Materials and Readings

Survey data showed that the participants that the *readings were of high quality, provided useful new information* and *helped them to bring into focus already known information.* They also thought that the *follow-up provided by the University staff members was very adequate.* An overwhelming number of the respondents stated that *they were able to suggest materials/readings for use in the group.* The one suggestion made by more that one study group member was that *more time for discussion was desired.*

Site Visits

Site visits were rated as either the *most important component* of the Project or of *equal importance* as other components. A number of the participants *requested more visitations* and *additional debriefing time.* The participants also stated that these visits *helped bridge the gap between theory and practice.*

Recommendations.

7. **Site visits should continue to be an integral part of the Project and thought should be given to increasing the number done.**

8. **More planning and time should be should be devoted to the debriefing sessions.**

Project Expectations

In most instances the Project *met participant expectations* and most indicated that it was *similar to what they expected* it to be. Most of the respondents stated that the *Project was useful to them* and that they were *confident it would continue to meet their expectations.*

Some of the participants *did not think they would be so actively involved in establishing Project objectives, in data collection* and *report writing.* Finally, a number of the respondents noted that they had *spent more time on the Project than expected.*

The most serious concern expressed in this section of the survey was that some participants *did not think that they had been adequately familiarized with Project goals prior to its implementation.*

Recommendations.

9. When new members enter the Project, school administrators and University staff should do a more thorough job in familiarizing them with the Project format and goals, and in the role participants are expected to play.

Support for the Project

The participants were *very satisfied with the support provided by the University staff members.* The majority indicated that the *support provided by their school administrator was very good.* However, a *few* respondents noted that they had *received a number of miscommunications about the Project from school administration.*

The Report Writing Process

Conclusions in this should be examined with the following in mind: (a) some participants were still in the process of writing reports when they completed the survey; (b) some sites wrote the reports in a different order than anticipated; and (c) the "unofficial" members of the Project were not required to write a report.

For the most part Project participants thought that the *University staff provided useful assistance during the report writing process.* The *reports were perceived as helping* them to

make connections between theory and practice, develop a plan for Year 2, evaluate the value of the Project, and *make judgments about student progress.*

Recommendations.

10. Implementation Plans and Student Outcome Reports should continue to be written, and the teacher participants should be responsible for their production.

11. University staff should continue to provide support for the report writing process.

Project Usefulness and Final Comments

A large percentage of the participants stated that they had *learned a number of new skills* and *were already using these in their classrooms.* It was *noteworthy* that the *most often specified new skills* were related to *writing performance objectives* and *assessing student progress.*

A *majority* of the respondents indicated that the *Project had resulted in a number of positive changes in their students' performance.*

The Final Comments section repeated three themes from previous sections: (1) *the desire for more site visits and debriefing time;* (2) *the need for participants to be more thoroughly introduced to the Project*; and (3) *the request for more inter-staff meetings, visitations and discussions.*

Recommendations.

12. The Project should continue to emphasize teacher specification of student performance objectives and teacher assessment of student outcomes.

Concluding Remarks

Responses to the Teacher Survey correspond very closely with the nine conditions McGowan (1990) identified as necessary for effective collaboration.[1] First, collaboration takes time and the willingness to expend the necessary time. We believe that the participants

[1] McGowan, Thomas M. "Reflections of an Experienced Collaborator." in *Collaboration: Building Common Agendas,* edited by Henrietta Schwartz. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1990.

exhibited this willingness throughout Year 1, and their attendance at meetings and their report writing attest to this fact.

Second, the individuals involved in the collaboration must see benefits for their institutions and themselves. Teacher perceptions about establishing specific performance objectives and assessing student outcomes highlight the importance of seeing benefits. In addition, the collaborative effort must address the real needs of all those involved. Participant empowerment assures that such issues are addressed.

Third, the formal leadership of the involved institutions must be supportive. The support of administration should be articulated publicly. Also, they need to understand the issues being studied and encourage their staff to participate. The survey and our experience indicated that the White Horse Plan School Division No. 20 administration was publicly supportive of the Project and encouraged staff participation. The spending of Division funds to allow additional staff to participate exemplifies such support.

Fourth, a core group should be responsible for planning and setting priorities. The Management Committee, which was composed of teacher participants, school administrators, Student Support Branch consultants and University staff, served this purpose. Even though this was a new role for some of the participants, their comments indicated they appreciated the planning and decisions making opportunities this committee and the study group afforded them.

Fifth, mutual respect is essential for those engaged in a successful collaborative activity. Survey comments and our observations indicated that this collegiality was established. All participants (i.e., school and university) were open to learn from each other. We believe that all of us felt we had valuable ideas to contribute and that our colleagues accepted them as such.

Sixth, collaboration needs direction. The participants must know why they are there and have a clear sense of what they would like to accomplish. It was obvious that the establishment of their own specific student performance objectives was important for the

participants. It was equally important to them that the Project goals and format be clearly communicated. This, however, seemed to be a Project weakness.

Seventh, at some point early in the collaboration, the group needs to set up an operational structure. This was done, but survey comments indicated that some participants felt setting this structure up took time from other endeavors. Regardless, some flexible rules or operating procedures need to be established so that expectations are clear for all involved. The fact that the participants were able to judge if expectations were being met indicates that the operational structure was successful.

Eighth, a collaborative group should have one or more process models to guide its deliberations. We believe that the process models used in the group developed naturally rather than being pre-planned. The entry level model was one that might be characterized as a sharing model that provided a non threatening starting point.

Ninth, a critical condition for successful collaboration is the willingness to be flexible. The participants in the R/WI exemplified such willingness. They always attempted to understand the perspectives of others and were willing to think about new ways of doing things.

The form of collaboration used in the R/WI Project is not quickly or easily established. It depends on building mutual understandings, establishing trust, creating a structure for implementing decisions, and making a serious commitment over an extended period of time. Projects of this sort require that the participants overlook differences and work together toward mutual goals. We believe that the R/WI participants exhibited the open communication, trust, honesty and the long-term commitment required of those committed to making productive change in classrooms.

Appendix A

Teacher Survey And Results

READING/WRITING IMMERSION:
A DECISION MAKING LITERACY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

TEACHER SURVEY

April 22, 1993

One of the conditions of the funding for this Project is that it be evaluated. The purpose of this survey is to collect information from the participants in order to provide evaluative information to the funder and also to provide information that will assist in making improvements, if needed, to the Project. As previously discussed with you, **all responses will be kept completely confidential! Therefore, do not include your name anywhere on this survey!**

Please complete and return this survey in the envelope provided. In order to allow us adequate time to analyze the results, please mail the survey back to us by **Friday, April 30, 1993**. After the data has been compiled, it will be shared with you at one of our meetings.

Please read each question carefully. For each question, find the response which best represents your opinion and **circle it**. If you need more space for writing in comments/suggestions, use the back of the page. If you have any questions concerning the survey, we will be more than happy to answer them (phone Paul at 474-8712). We would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to assist us in the very important task of evaluating the Reading/Writing Immersion Project.

A. The school I work in is

6 (54.5%)	1.)	an official member of the Project.
5 (45.5%)	2.)	an unofficial member of the Project.

I. MEETINGS

1. The meetings for the Reading/Writing Immersion Program have been held at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School. How do you feel about this location?

9 (81.8%)	1.)	the location is fine.
0	2.)	the location is too far from my home school.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	it does not matter to me where the meetings are held.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question.

2. Rate the room in which the meetings have been held in by circling the most appropriate response.

		Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor
a.)	room is clean	**11 (100.0%)**	**0**	**0**	**0**
b.)	room is well lighted	**11 (100.0%)**	**0**	**0**	**0**
c.)	size of the room is adequate	**11 (100.0%)**	**0**	**0**	**0**
d.)	temperature of room is comfortable	**9 (81.8%)**	**2 (18.2%)**	**0**	**0**

3. In your opinion, how would you rate the overall organization of the meetings held so far?

3 (27.3%) 1.) meetings have been very well organized.
8 (72.7%) 2.) meetings have been well organized.
0 3.) meetings have been poorly organized.
0 4.) meetings have been very poorly organized.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

4. Given that one of the main goals of this Project is that a collaborative approach be utilized, how satisfied are you with the opportunities you have had with regards to input into the agendas of the meetings?

8 (72.7%) 1.) very satisfied.
3 (27.3%) 2.) somewhat satisfied.
0 3.) somewhat dissatisfied.
0 4.) not at all satisfied.

Comments/suggestions for improvements.

5. When you have made suggestions with regards to the meeting agendas, did you feel that your suggestions were given adequate consideration?

7 (63.6%)	1.)	very adequate consideration.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	adequate consideration.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	were considered, but not adequately.
0	4.)	were not considered at all.

Comments/suggestions.

II. MATERIALS/READINGS

6. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the reading material that have been provided to you?

2 (18.2%)	1.)	very high quality.
9 (81.8%)	2.)	high quality.
0	3.)	poor quality.
0	4.)	very poor quality.

Comments/suggestions.

7. Do you feel that the reading material provided to you thus far has presented:

0	1.)	mostly new information.
8 72.7%)	2.)	a half-and-half mixture of new and old information.
3 (27.3%)	3.)	mostly old information that I already knew.

8. Overall, how would you rate the usefulness of the reading material provided to you?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	very useful.
6 (54.5%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0	3.)	not very useful.
0	4.)	not at all useful.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

9. How would you rate the amount of information that has been provided to you?

0	1.)	far too much material.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	just a little too much material to be read in one week.
7 (63.6%)	3.)	the right amount.
0	4.)	could have dealt with a little more material each week.
0	5.)	far too little in the way of materials/readings were provided.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

10. How adequate was the University Staff follow-up to the reading material (i.e., willingness to discuss/explain ideas presented in the materials/readings)?

8 (72.7%)	1.)	very adequate.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	adequate.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	somewhat adequate.
0	4.)	not at all adequate.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

11. Do you feel that the reading material given to you covered the topic areas that you thought would be covered when you started the Program?

7 (63.6%)	1.)	yes, very few surprises.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	yes, but there were a number of areas I did not expect to be covered.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	no, there were a lot of areas covered that I did not expect.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question.

12. Were there topic areas you would have liked to have received reading material on, but did not?

3 (27.3%)	1.)	yes.
8 (72.7%)	2.)	no.

If yes, what were those topic areas?

13. Given that this is a collaborative Project, did you feel that you could suggest reading material for the group?

10 (90.9%)	1.)	yes.
1 (9.1%)	2.)	no.

Comments/suggestions

III. SCHOOL VISITS

14. How helpful were observations/suggestions made during the school visits in focusing the intent of the Program?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	very useful.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0	3.)	not very useful.
0	4.)	not at all useful.
3 (27.3%)		Did not respond to question

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

15. How helpful were the school visits in assisting you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids?

3 (27.3%)	1.)	very useful.
4 (36.4%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0	3.)	not very useful.
0	4.)	not at all useful.
4 (36.4%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

16. Overall, when comparing all of the components of the Reading/Writing Immersion Project (i.e., sessions at the St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and school visits), how important were the school visits made by Gerry and Paul?

3 (27.3%)	1.)	the most important component.
4 (36.4%)	2.)	equal in importance to the other two components.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	not as important as the other two components.
0	4.)	not at all important.
3 (27.3%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions.

17. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add about the school visits?

IV. PROJECT EXPECTATIONS

18. At this point in time, is the Project:

1 (9.1%)	1.)	exactly what you thought it would be.
1 (9.1%)	2.)	very close to what you thought it would be.
7 (63.6%)	3.)	somewhat close to what you thought it would be.
1 (9.1%)	4.)	not at all what you thought it to be.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question

If not what you thought, how is it different?

19. Are the topic areas that have been covered since September, the topic areas that you thought would be covered?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	yes.
5 (45.5%)	2.)	no.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question.

If no, what was different?

20. Is the Project turning out to be as useful to you as you thought it would be?

2 (18.2%)	1.)	yes, very useful.
7 (63.6%)	2.)	yes, somewhat useful.
1 (9.1%)	3.)	no, not very useful.
0	4.)	no, not at all useful.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions for improvements.

21. At this point, how confident are you that your expectations for the Project will be reached?

2 (18.2%)	1.)	very confident.
5 (45.5%)	2.)	somewhat confident.
3 (27.3%)	3.)	not very confident.
0	4.)	not at all confident.
1 (9.1%)		Did not respond to question.

Why or why not?

22. Going back to September, was the time you have put into the Project:

1 (9.1%)	1.)	much more than you expected.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	a bit more than you expected.
5 (45.5%)	3.)	just what you expected.
0	4.)	a bit less than you expected.
0	5.)	a lot less than you expected.
2 (18.2%)		Did not respond to question.

23. Do you have any additional comment/concerns/suggestions to make regarding the amount of time taken up by this Project?

V. SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

24. In your opinion, how would you rate the University Staff in the areas listed below?

		Always	Sometimes	Never
a.)	they are approachable	**10 (90.9%)**	**1 (9.1%)**	**0**
b.)	they value my opinions	**9 (81.8%)**	**2 (18.2%)**	**0**
c.)	they treated me as a professional	**11 (100.0%)**	**0**	**0**
d.)	they were willing to answer all my questions	**9 (81.8%)**	**2 (18.2%)**	**0**
e.)	they empathize with the problems I have to deal with in the classroom	**10 (90.9%)**	**1 (9.1%)**	**0**
f.)	they suggest rather than dictate or criticize	**9 (81.8%)**	**2 (18.2%)**	**0**
g.)	they actively look for and encourage my input	**6 (54.4%)**	**5 (45.5%)**	**0**
h.)	they help me feel more confident about what I do in the classroom	**8 (72.7%)**	**3 (27.3%)**	**0**
i.)	they make suggestions that are useful to me	**8 (72.7%)**	**3 (27.3%)**	**0**
j.)	they try to make the Project challenging*	**7 (63.6%)**	**3 (27.3%)**	**0**

* 1 (9.1%) Did not respond to the question.

Comments/suggestions for improvement.

25. In your opinion, how would you rate the support being provided to this Program from your school's administrator(s)?

6 (54.5%)	1.)	very good.
0	2.)	good.
4 (36.4%)	3.)	poor.
1 (9.1%)	4.)	very poor.

Comments/suggestions for improvements.

VI. WRITING PROCESS

26. How helpful were the university staff in assisting you in writing your final school report?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	very helpful.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	somewhat helpful.
0	3.)	not very helpful.
0	4.)	not at all helpful.
4 (36.4%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions:

27. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to make connections between the material/content presented in the sessions at St. Francois Xavier Elementary School and what you do with kids?

2 (18.2%)	1.)	very useful.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0	3.)	not very useful.
0	4.)	not at all useful.
7 (63.6%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions:

28. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to develop an implementation plan for Year 2 of the Project?

2 (18.2%)	1.)	very useful.
2 (18.2%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0	3.)	not very useful.
2 (18.2%)	4.)	not at all useful.
5 (45.5%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions:

29. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the value of the Project to your professional development?

1 (9.1%)	1.)	very useful.
4 (36.4%)	2.)	somewhat useful.
0	3.)	not very useful.
1 (9.1%)	4.)	not at all useful.
5 (45.5%)		Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions:

30. How useful was writing the final school report in helping you to evaluate the progress made by the students involved in the Project?

2 (18.2%)	1.) very useful.
4 (36.4%)	2.) somewhat useful.
1 (9.1%)	3.) not very useful.
0	4.) not at all useful.
4 (36.4%)	Did not respond to question.

Comments/suggestions:

31. What additional assistance could have been provided that would have helped you in writing your final school report?

32. Do you have any other comments/concerns you would like to add about writing the final school report?

VII. PROGRAM USEFULNESS AND FINAL COMMENTS

33. Based on your experiences with the Project, how would your rate the following items?

a.) I find that the information presented so far has been:

2 (18.2%)	1.)	very useful.
7 (63.6%)	2.)	useful.
2 (18.2%)	3.)	somewhat useful.
0	4.)	not at all useful.

b.) I find that I am already trying out some of the ideas/techniques in my classroom.

11 (100.0%)	1.)	yes.
0	2.)	no.

c.) I find that I have already adopted some of the ideas/techniques as part of what I do in my classroom.

11 (100.0%)	1.)	yes.
0	2.)	no.

d.) Based on your experiences thus far, what do you feel is the probability that you will make changes to what you do in the classroom?

5 (45.5%)	1.)	I am 100% certain I will make changes.
3 (27.3%)	2.)	I am 85% certain I will make changes.
3 (27.3%)	3.)	I am 50% certain I will make changes.
0	4.)	I am 25% certain I will make changes.
0	5.)	I am 100% certain that I will not make changes.

e.) Based on your experiences thus far, have you seen positive changes in the performance of your students that can be stated to be a direct result of this Project?

2 (18.2%)	1.)	yes, I have noticed many positive changes.
6 (54.5%)	2.)	yes, I have noticed a few positive changes.
0	3.)	no, I have not noticed any positive changes.
3 (27.3%)	4.)	I do not know.

f.) Do you feel that this Project has helped you to improve your teaching skills?

10 (90.9%)	1.)	yes.
1 (9.1%)	2.)	no.

Comments.

34. Name/describe some changes that you have already made in the way you work with children that have been a direct result of this Project.

35. If you could change one thing about the Project, what would it be?

36. Given what has taken place between the start of the Project and now, do you have any suggestions that you have not already made earlier in this survey for improving the Reading/Writing Immersion Project? If so, what are they?

37. Do you have any other comments/concerns that you would like to add, but haven't been asked?

THANK YOU!